

DEATHS

There were 5,381 resident deaths in 2010, 353 more than in 2009. The crude death rate increased from 8.1 to 8.6 per 1,000/population. The death rate has fluctuated between 8.1 and 8.6 since 1988; prior to then it had been slowly declining from 11.2 in 1960, to 10.0 in 1970, down to 9.0 in 1980. The Vermont crude death rate was slightly higher than the U.S. white crude death rate until 1970 when the rates converged and remained similar through 1980. Since 1981, Vermont's death rate has been slightly lower than the U.S. white rate. In 2010 the Vermont death rate was the same as the U.S. white rate of 8.6 per 1,000 population. Comparisons are made to the U.S. white rate because 99 percent of Vermont residents who died in 2010 were white ([Table C-9](#)).

From the 1960's through 2006 the two leading causes of death in Vermont were heart disease and cancer, respectively. In 2007 cancer took over as the leading cause of death among Vermonters. Cancer and heart disease accounted for 47.7 percent of the deaths in 2010 ([Table C-11](#)). The crude death rate for cancer (malignant neoplasms) rose steadily through the 1980's and 1990's before starting to decline in this decade. After a high of 204.0 per 100,000/population in 2001, the rate decreased to 194.1 in 2006, increased to 215.7 in 2007, and decreased to 201.4 in 2009 and increased 223.1 in 2010. In contrast, the heart disease crude death rate peaked in the 1960's at 439.5 deaths per 100,000 population, but has decreased significantly since then. The rate for 2010 was 187.0 per 100,000 ([Table C-1](#)).

Chronic lower respiratory diseases (formerly referred to as chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases) have been the third leading cause of death among Vermont residents since 2005. The crude death rate for this cause increased from 33.0 in the period from 1979 to 1981 to 50.9 in 2000. After a slight decrease in 2001, and another decreased in 2002, the rate has fluctuated throughout this decade. In 2010, the rate was 53.5 per 100,000/population.

Accidents (or unintentional injuries) maintained its position as the fourth leading cause of death in Vermont, since 2005. The crude death declined to 31.3 in 1994 to 1996. From the mid 1990's through 2006, the death rate continued to increase, but has leveled off in recent years. The crude rate for 2010 was 47.5.

Cerebrovascular diseases, or stroke, dropped from the third leading cause of death in 2004 to the fifth leading cause beginning in 2005. The crude death rate for cerebrovascular diseases has dropped significantly from its peak of 131.9 in the early 1960's to 42.5 in 2010.

The crude death rate from Alzheimer's disease steadily increased throughout the 1990's and into this decade, resulting in movement up from the tenth to the seventh leading cause of death in 1999. In 2004, Alzheimer's disease moved up to the sixth leading cause of death, and remained there through 2010. The crude death rate for Alzheimer's disease in 2010 was 37.7.

Diabetes remained the seventh leading cause of death in Vermont in 2010, and the rate has continued to fluctuate through this decade, from 26.9 in 2000 to 29.6 in 2003, 27.4 in 2007 to 24.0 in 2010.

Intentional self-harm (or suicide) remained the eighth leading cause of death in 2010. After a steady increase over the prior five years, 12.0 in 2005 to 14.0 in 2009, the rate increased again to 17.3 in 2010.

Parkinson's disease moved up to the ninth leading cause of death in Vermont in 2010, replacing influenza and pneumonia with a crude rate of 11.2 deaths per 100,000/population.

The tenth leading cause of death in Vermont in 2010 was influenza and pneumonia with a crude rate of 9.7 deaths per 100,000/population which replaced chronic liver disease and cirrhosis in 2009.

The leading causes of death varied with age ([Table C-2](#)) and ([Table C-14](#)). Unintentional injuries were the leading cause of death for people age 15 to 44. Cancer was the leading cause of death, followed by heart disease for 45-84 year olds, and at ages 85 and higher, the causes were reversed with heart disease as the leading cause, followed by cancer.

Death rates dramatically increase after age 75. While people age 75 and over comprised only 6.6 percent of the total population, they accounted for 61.8 percent of total deaths. Except for accidents and influenza and pneumonia, the leading causes of death in this age group were all chronic diseases.

The leading causes of death did vary by sex as in 2010 ([Table C-1](#)) and ([Table C-11](#)). While cancer and heart were disease the top two causes for both Vermont males and females, later rankings for cause of death varied.

Accidents, chronic lower respiratory diseases, cerebrovascular diseases, and suicides ranked third, fourth, fifth, and sixth respectively for Vermont males. While chronic lower respiratory disease, Alzheimer's disease, cerebrovascular diseases and accidents, were the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth leading causes of death for Vermont females.

Diabetes was the seventh leading cause of death among Vermont males, and Alzheimer's disease was eighth while Parkinson's disease was ninth, leaving chronic liver disease and cirrhosis as the tenth leading cause of death among Vermont males.

Diabetes and Influenza and pneumonia were ranked as the seventh and eighth leading causes of death for Vermont females, with hypertensive renal disease ranked ninth, and Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome and nephrosis as the tenth leading cause among Vermont females.

Deaths occurring in a hospital accounted for 35.8 percent of Vermont resident deaths ([Table C-17](#)), down from 62 percent in 1980, 53 percent in 1990 and 41.2 percent in 2000. In 2010, 27.8 percent of Vermont resident deaths occurred at home, and 29.5 percent occurred in a nursing home.